

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 MCE-00
AID-05 DODE-00 /080 W
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R 081608Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3232
INFO AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 0945

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SW, NO, PK, SZ, IR
SUBJ: SALES OF RBS 70, ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE

REF: STATE 046493

1. SWEDISH GOVERNMENT IS WELL AWARE OF US CONCERN ABOUT ANY MANPADS, INCLUDING RBS 70, FALLING INTO HANDS OF TERRORISTS. MFA SECRETARY GENERAL LEIF LEIFLAND, DURING HIS TALKS IN WASHINGTON IN DECEMBER 1977, HEARD ABOUT THE RBS 70 FROM HEARLY EVERY HIGH-LEVEL US OFFICIAL HE MET, AND HE BRIEFED AMBASSADOR AND DCM ON THESE DISCUSSIONS UPON HIS RETURN TO STOCKHOLM.

2. GOS HAS TAKEN POSITION FROM THE OUTSET THAT RBS 70 IS FAR LESS LIKELY TO ATTRACT TERRORISTS THAN SMALLER AND SIMPLER SYSTEMS PRODUCED BY OTHER COUNTRIES. LEIFLAND TOLD US THAT RBS 70 WAS DESCRIBED IN USG PAPER AS OUTSIDE THE DEFINITION OF MANPADS LIKELY TO BE SOUGHT FOR UTILIZATION BY TERRORISTS (EMBASSY MEMCON OF JANUARY 3, 1978). GOS SPOKESMEN HAVE ALSO SAID THAT GOS POLICY WOULD PRECLUDE SALES TO ARAB STATES OR ISRAEL (WHERE PRESUMABLY DANGER OF SEIZURE BY TERRORISTS
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MIGHT BE GREATEST). WE ASSUME GENERAL STAHL IN HIS CALL ON ERICSON (REFTEL) WAS REEMPHASIZING THIS GOS POSITION WITH AN EYE TO JUSTIFYING PUTATIVE SALES TO PAKISTAN OR OTHER COUNTRIES NAMED.

3. REGARDING US COMPONENTRY, EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION SUGGESTING US INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION OR DEVELOPMENT OF THE

RBS 70. THIS IS A SWEDISH PRODUCT, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, AND LEIFLAND AND MANY OTHER GOS SPOKESMEN HAVE ASSURED US ABSOLUTELY THAT THIS IS THE CASE. (THERE IS AN "OFF-THE-SHELF" GYROSCOPE USED IN THE LAUNCHER MADE BY THE HUMPHREY CO., AS WE UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS NOT SUBJECT TO ANY THIRD-COUNTRY SALES RESTRICTIONS.)

4. DCM DISCUSSED STAHL-ERICSON CONVERSATION WITH NORTH AMERICAN DESK OFFICER LARS-AKE NILSSON AND STAHL'S ACCOUNT OF THE CONVERSATION JIBES ENTIRELY WITH REFTEL, ALTHOUGH UNDERSTANDABLY STAHL STRESSED THE MORE POSITIVE SAIDE AND REFTEL THE NEGATIVE. FIRST SENTENCE PARA 4 REFTEL SUMMED UP US POSITION WELL AS UNDERSTOOD BY SWEDES. (SITUATION IS SUCH, IT SEEMS TO US, THAT IF SWEDISH SALES WERE CONSUMMATED, USG WOULD BE IN POSITION TO SAY, "WE TOLD YOU OF OUR CONCERN IN THIS MATTER", AND GOS WOULD BE IN POSITION TO SAY, "BUT YOU AGREED THAT THIS WAS ONLY USG INTERNAL POLICY".) EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT USG SPOKESMEN, AND THESE CONCERNS HAVE REACHED HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOS. THUS FAR WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT US ARGUMENTS HAVE CONVINCED GOS IT SHOULD FORBID SALES OF RBS 70, ALTHOUGH WE DO BELIEVE GOS AGREES WITH US ON NEED FOR STRICT SECURITY GUARANTEES ATTENDANT UPON ANY SALES.

5. IN CONSIDERING FURTHER STEPS IN THIS MATTER, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO KEEP FOLLOWING ELEMENTS IN VIEW. (A) SWEDISH ECONOMIC SITUATION IS DIFFICULT AND EXPORT SALES ARE VITAL AT CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS TIME WHEN SWEDEN'S MARKET SHARES ARE FALLING. PRESENT NON-SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT IS FACED WITH DIRE NEED TO GET THE ECONOMY IN BETTER SHAPE BEFORE FALL 1979 ELECTIONS. (B) ARMS SALES ABROAD ARE UNPOPULAR WITH MANY SWEDES, ARE SUBJECT TO VERY TIGHT GOVERNMENT LIMITATIONS, AND HAVE BEEN REPEATED SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY IN THE PRESS (MOST RECENTLY SEE STOCKHOLM 0557). THIS MEANS THE GOS MAY BE VULNERABLE TO SOME CRITICISM ON MANPAD ISSUE, IF SALES MADE AND FACTS BECOME KNOWN. (C) CREDIBLE SWEDISH DEFENSE, WHICH WE CONSIDER VERY MUCH IN WESTERN INTEREST, DEPENDS IN SOME MEASURE UPON MAINTENANCE OF INDIGENOUS ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY, WHICH IN TURN DEPENDS UPON SOME ARMS EXPORTS. (D) BECAUSE OF US COMPONENTRY IN SO MANY SOPHISTICATED SWEDISH PRODUCTS, SWEDES ARE FREQUENTLY IN POSITION OF SEEKING US PERMISSION FOR EXPORTS, AND THEIR RECORD OF COMPLIANCE WITH USG REGULATIONS IS EXCELLENT. SOME CASES HAVE BEEN PROTRACTED AND PAINFUL, MOST NOTABLE BEING CASE OF STANSAAB AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM SALE TO USSR WHICH LASTED VERY LONG TIME AND IN WHICH AMBASSADOR BECAME HEAVILY INVOLVED. ANOTHER CASE WAS POSSIBLE SALE OF VIGGEN AIRCRAFT TO INDIA (STILL NOT A DEAD ISSUE), WHERE USG INFORMED SAAB INFORMALLY THAT IF GOS SOUGHT PERMISSION, IT WOULD NOT BE GRANTED (AS OF 1976). (E) THESE AND OTHER CASES WHERE US COMPONENTRY WAS INVOLVED HAVE SENSIT-

IZED THE AREA OF POSSIBLE SWEDISH EXPORTS WHERE US COMPONENTRY IS NOT INVOLVED. THE EXTREMELY TOUCHY CASE OF ASEA SALES OF NUCON 400 TO POLAND IS THE CURRENT EXAMPLE (STOCKHOLM 0844), AND AMBASSADOR PLANS TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WHILE ON CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON WEEK OF MARCH 13. (F) WHILE USG CONCERNS ABOUT RBS 70 ARISE FROM ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SOURCE THAN OUR CONCERN ABOUT NUCON 400, THE GOS MAY TEND TO PUT BOTH IN SAME BASKET OF PROBLEMS WITH US DISAPPROVAL OF EXPORTS NOT INVOLVING US COMPONENTS AND NOT REQUIRING US APPROVAL. THE PRINCIPAL OF SWEDISH NEUTRALITY AND ITS SELF-IMPOSED DISTANCE FROM NATO AND COCOM COULD BECOME INVOLVED.

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R 081608Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3233
INFO AMEMBASSY BERN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 0945

6. THIS EMBASSY CANNOT PROPERLY JUDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCOURAGING MANPAD SALES AS COMPARED WITH THE POSSIBLE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF LEANING ON THE SWEDES HEAVILY IN AN ALREADY SENSITIVE AREA. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO PUT THE MATTER INTO PERSPECTIVE SO THAT THE DEPARTMENT CAN BETTER JUDGE THE SWEDISH ATTITUDE. THE EMBASSY DOES HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH THE SWEDES ON THIS MATTER AS PARTNERS, NOT AS ADVERSARIES, AND WE SEE A POSSIBLE SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION ALL AROUND IF ANY SALES ARE SURROUNDED BY STRICT SECURITY SAFEGUARDS. PLEASE KEEP THE EMBASSY INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS. THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER DURING CONSULTATION.

(7. NOTE: EMBASSY IS VERY RECENTLY IN RECEIPT OF REPORT ABOUT POSSIBLE RE-EXPORT OF WEAPONS INCLUDING RBS 70 FROM PAKISTAN

TO SOME ARAB COUNTRIES. SEVERAL BASIC INACCURACIES CAST DOUBT
ON GENERAL VALIDITY OF REPORT, BUT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND VERIFICATION. ANY ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND ON THE OVERALL SUBJECT THAT MIGHT
BE PROVIDED TO AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON OR SENT TO EMBASSY
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WOULD BE APPRECIATED.)
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